

Rejections Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grumbine (U.S. Pat. No. 6,136,711) in view of one of skill in the art at the time of the invention.

The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection as follows.

Pursuant to 37 C.F. R. § 1.131, the Applicants respectfully submit the enclosed Declaration by Anne E. Miller, A. Daniel Feller, and Kenneth C. Cadien establishing that the Applicants sufficiently completed the present invention in the United States of America prior to the May 29, 1998 filing date of Grumbine, such that Grumbine cannot bar the grant of a patent covering the present invention or the confirmation of the patentability of the claims of the patent.

The Applicants therefore respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-14 has been overcome and should accordingly be withdrawn.

The Applicants' response in this manner is not an admission by the Applicants that Grumbine anticipates any claim in this application.

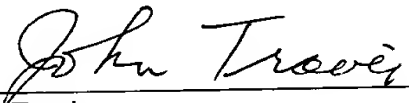
The Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-14 are in condition for allowance and request reconsideration of the subject application. Should the Examiner desire, the referenced attorney will be available for a telephone conference at the number indicated.

It is believed that no fee is due with this response, however, should a fee be deemed due,
please charge Blakely Sokoloff Taylor & Zafman LLP Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY SOKOLOFF TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Date: 4-4-01



John Travis
Reg. No. 43,203
(512) 330-0844

12400 Wilshire Blvd.
Seventh Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90025-1026